

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

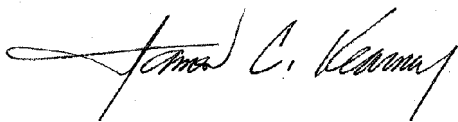
Farm Service Agency
Washington, DC 20250

Notice PM-2119

For: FSA Employees

Notification of Potential FY 2000 Reductions and Planned Mitigating Actions

Approved by: Acting Administrator



1 Overview

A

Background

FSA must reduce both Federal and CO positions to meet current FY 2000 budget levels. The number of required separations will not be known until Congress acts on the USDA appropriations bill; but, if the current levels contained in the bill do not change, FSA FTE reductions will be 100 Federal and 652 CO positions. FSA will be required to align its employment levels on the basis of the appropriations bill as enacted.

B

Purpose

This notice informs employees and bargaining unit representatives of the impact of reductions, if appropriations levels remain as currently proposed.

2 Reductions

A

**Effect of
Vacancies Upon
Reduction
Targets**

Because some funded vacancies were not filled in FY 1999, the number of anticipated reductions required in FY 2000 is correspondingly reduced. However, to avoid the possibility of RIF, we are imposing an immediate hiring freeze on permanent positions. Exceptions to the freeze for Headquarters, Kansas City, St. Louis, and APFO shall be approved by the appropriate Deputy Administrator or designee. EDSO will approve freeze exceptions for State and County Offices.

Continued on the next page

Disposal Date

December 1, 1999

Distribution

All FSA Employees; State Offices relay to County Offices

2 Reductions (Continued)

B

VSIP and Early Out Authorities for Federal Employees

FSA is **not** offering Voluntary Separation Incentive Payments (VSIP's or buyouts) to Federal employees as FSA expects to meet targeted Federal reductions through attrition.

FSA is considering offering voluntary early outs to Federal employees in specific locations and/or occupations. Voluntary early outs are conditional upon:

- progress in meeting reductions
 - OPM approval.
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C

Early Out and VSIP Authority for CO Employees

FSA is requesting authority from the Department to announce Voluntary Early Outs and VSIP's (or buyouts) for CO employees. Implementing buyouts also requires approval from OMB. VSIP's and early outs are intended to assist in reducing the size of the CO workforce and minimize the impact on employees that would otherwise occur through RIF's. A notice announcing VSIP's and early outs will be issued if FSA receives approval, and if final Congressional action on appropriations remains at current levels.

D

Impact

If an insufficient number of CO employees apply for early outs, RIF's will be necessary.
